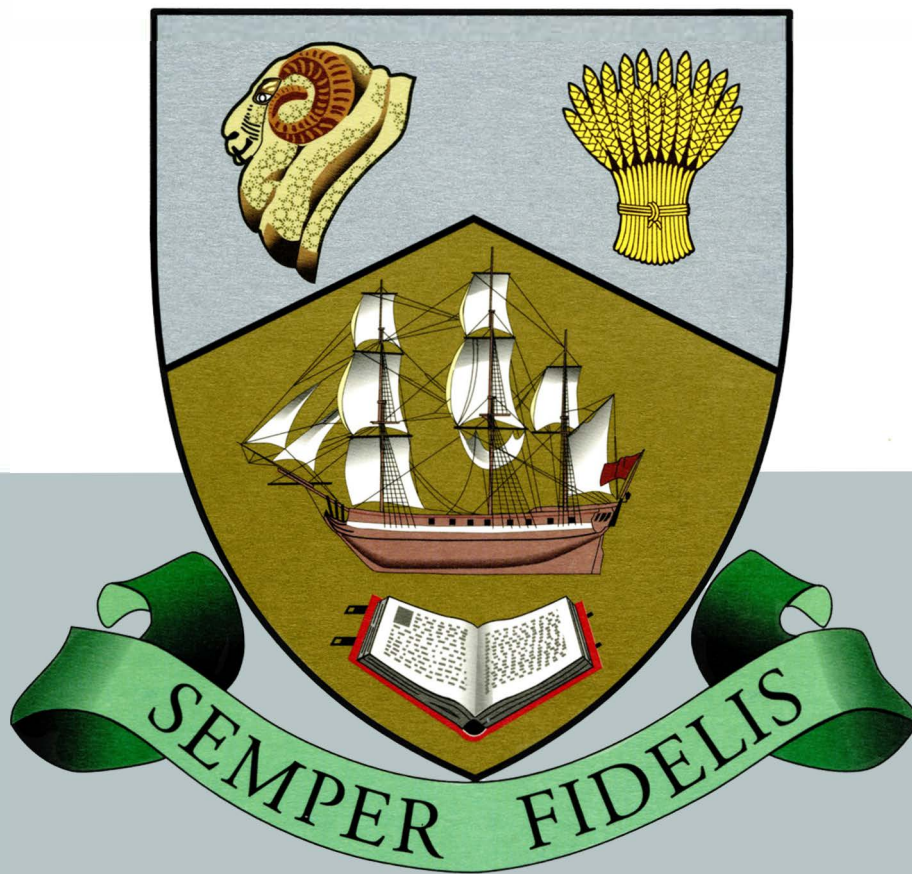


*Hassall Family
History Association*

Newsletter

Edition 58
March 2024



From the committee

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2024! In the coming months the Association's efforts are focused on a meeting in Queensland in July, on a new Hassall Heritage project commencing with a meeting in Sydney in about August, and on the continuing project of transcribing the Hassall Family Papers held in the State Library of New South Wales. We also need to plan for our online AGM on August 7th.

This newsletter features a previously unpublished article by Jean Stewart, a report on the James and Catherine line annual meeting in Melbourne, and the passing at age 97 of Ian Litchfield. We also include a membership renewal form. Although we distribute this newsletter to more than 60 current and former members, in 2023-2024 the Association only received 28 subscriptions (including 4 life memberships). We'd like to improve on this for the coming membership year 2024-25. The purpose of subscriptions is not to raise revenue (in fact our costs are higher than incoming membership fees) but to gain a sense of shared commitment to understanding the Hassall family heritage in Australia. We also need members to participate in the Association's administration.

Events

Victoria: James Hassall Family Descendants Picnic 2023

Report by Rowland Hassall

Second Sunday of December picnic in Wattle Park each year since 1947



Since about 1947, after the Second World War (WWII), descendants of James Hassall's (AE) son George Ernest Hassall (AEJ) have met to maintain contact between the cousins, as the generations have drifted down through time. Margaret Avitabile, (AEJDA?) daughter of Noreen Margaret Hassall (AEJDA) and Catello Frank Avitabile (known as Frank) has with David J Hassall (AEJDCC), the author of "THE BOOK" (*The Hassall Family*, 1998) have maintained that get together since the 60's when they attended with their parents and grandparents, cousins, uncles and aunts.

I found out about it from my grandfather, Rowland James Hassall (AEJA), great grandson of Rowland Hassall (A), grandson of James Hassall (AE) and eldest son of George Ernest Hassall (AEJ) and Catherine Bridget McPhee. George passed on the name Rowland to my father and to me in memory of George's favourite brother who went off to New Zealand (NZ), i.e. Rowland Hope Hassall (AEF) who founded the Hassalls in NZ.

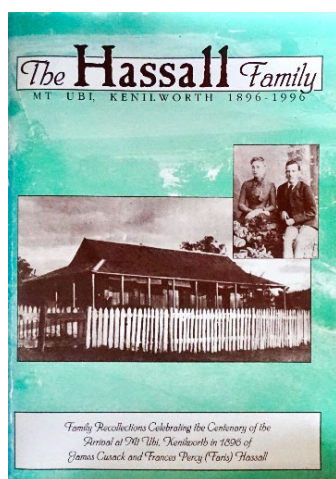
I, (AEJAAB) went to the picnic with my father (AEJAA) when I married and lived in Surrey Hills a few streets from Wattle Park. It was there that I met David J and we became friends as well as cousins. We joined forces with NSW Hassall's for the planning and production of the 200-year reunion.

Following the formation of HFHA and the committee for the 225-year reunion ("the committee") it was decided to promote line meetings – James Hassall (AE) line is my job. As I was on the committee, I decided the best thing might be to help Margaret and David promote the picnic on the second Sunday in December by getting as many cousins as we could to come along. It worked. We managed to convince about 35-40 people to attend. Those present in December 2023 included:

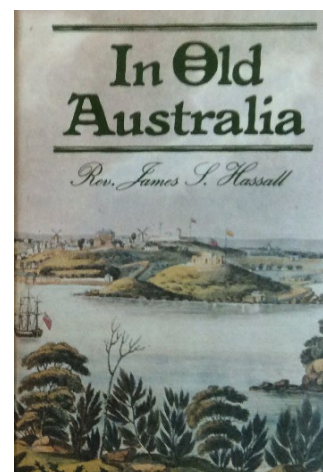
- Margaret Avitabile and her partner, her brother Robert and his wife;
- David J Hassall and his 3 children, 2 spouses and (about 5) grandchildren, David's Mother Patricia Hassall (AEJDC), David's sister Jenny and her husband Ian Large (AEJDCB);
- Anne Lynette Hassall (AEJDDC) and her husband Christopher Charles Perazzo and their daughter Nicole and her daughter.
- John Hassall (AEJABA), who is on the committee, his wife Laurie and his sisters Mary (AEJABB) (who did the artwork for the picnic ad), Margaret (AEJABD) who is on the committee and is the website manager for HFHA, and Catherine Hassall (AEJABE);
- Three children of Sheila Elizabeth Hassall (Deceased) (AEJAC) Julie, Gerard and Monica.
- Sebastian and his mother, Liliana whose father is Leon Richard Wynne Hassall (AEJAAG) – Leon was absent.
- My family, wife Joanne, children Danielle, John with wife Carmen and son Jeht, and my youngest William.
- And 2 people whose names I do not recall to whom I apologise. (The woman in red with green tinsel draped across her shoulders and the man standing behind her left shoulder in the hat, in the photos.)

Queensland: Reunion in Kenilworth and Sherwood next July

Update from Ann Brockhurst, Andrew Hassall, and Graham Hassall (event planning team).



From Friday 5th to Sunday 7th July, 2024, a reunion is being planned for Hassall family members from across South-East Queensland (of course any and all family members are most welcome to attend). The venues will include St Matthews Anglican Church, Sherwood, and Kenilworth, two hours to the north of Brisbane). These are the sites associated with the first establishment of Hassall family lines in Queensland. In the 1870s Rev. James Samuel Hassall (son of Thomas Hassall, and author of *In Old Australia*) with his wife Frances Dixon, moved to Queensland. For three decades James was parish priest at St Matthews Anglican Church, Sherwood.



Both are buried in Sherwood Cemetery.

Also in the 1870s, some children of James Hassall and Catherine Lloyd moved to Queensland. Among these were James Cusack Hassall (1858-1936) and his wife Francis Percy Faris, who settled first at Dandine Station on the Darling Downs before shifting to the Mount Ubi Station at Kenilworth. Their story is told in *The Hassall Family Mt Ubi Kenilworth 1896-1996* and in displays at the Kenilworth Museum <http://www.kenilworthmuseum.org.au>. Some family historians estimate that Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall had/have over 20,000 descendants in Australia and New Zealand. Many of them lived/live in Queensland and remain to be discovered, contacted and linked. We anticipate meeting many descendants of these two families, in a program that includes:

- The Kenilworth Museum;
- Talks on the contributions made by Hassall descendants to Queensland history;
- Exhibition of Hassall heritage items (letters, photos, relics);
- Reenactment of the triple wedding of November 1819;
- Sunday Service at St Matthews, Sherwood;
- Silent movie evening showing “Moth of Moonbi”;
- Visit to Hassall family gravesites at Sherwood and elsewhere.

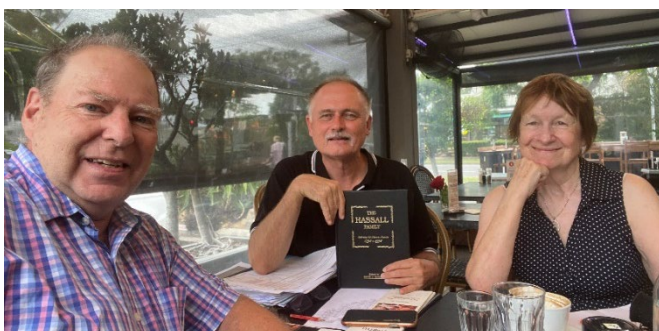
To register, contact Andrew Hassall: Phone/text 0417 592206

On 9th February Ann Brockhurst, Andrew Hassall, and Graham Hassall travelled to Kenilworth to commence planning for the July programme. *At right:* arriving at the Museum.



Left: Consulting on the program for 5th July.

Right: Rosanne McGreavey, Neil Sutton, Don Hassall, and Clem Hassall, standing in front of portraits of James Cusack Hassall and Frances Percy Faris.



Left: Graham and Andrew in Corinda, next to Sherwood, discussing the program with Dr Ann Webster.

Wedding Reenactment – expressions of interest requested

The Hassall Family History Association (HFHA) is seeking expressions of interest to assist the Association hold a reenactment of a triple wedding that occurred on 19th November 1819 at St. John’s Anglican Church in Parramatta, NSW. We need volunteer actors to portray family members in Regency period dress. We also would like to improve the presentation standard in production, direction, scripting—and other areas. The performance is set down for 3pm on Saturday 6th July 2024 at St Matthews Anglican Church, cnr Sherwood and Oxley Roads, Sherwood, Queensland. The reenactment pageant has been produced twice – at the May 1998 Hassall family bicentenary and again at the May 2023 Reunion. The script is by Hassall descendant Dr. Robert Wiles.

Photos of the May 2023 reenactment are on our Facebook site:-

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/hassall/permalink/6149080378501175/?mibextid=I6gGtw>

If you are interested please look at these links for background:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Cover_Lawry

[Journeys in Time: Mary Rouse \(mq.edu.au\)](http://Journeys.in.Time:Mary.Rouse(mq.edu.au))

[Home | Hassall Family History Association](#)

Please get in touch if you would be excited to be part of this reenactment. Andrew Hassall: Phone/text 0417 592206

In Memoriam – Ian Litchfield



On 9 February, 2024 Ian Mileham Litchfield passed away peacefully on at Lithgow District Hospital. Ian served in the Royal Australian Navy in WWII. He trained as an Anti-Aircraft Gunner and served aboard HMAS Bataan from May 1945 to January 1946 and again from April 1946 to September 1946. He was in Tokyo Bay on the day Japan surrendered aboard American battleship USS Missouri. In the post war years Ian moved to the hamlet of Hampton near Lithgow. He took up farming and amongst many other interests, campaigned for the establishment of a memorial in remembrance of the ANZAC spirit.

In 2014 Ian was awarded the OAM (general division) for service to the community of the Lithgow region. In 2022 Ian featured in a Sydney Morning Herald tribute (March 16) to his father Frank, chief engineer for steelwork on the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

At the Hassall

Family reunion in May 2023 Ian was acknowledged as the oldest member present, and he impressed everyone by managing to participate in the full 4-day program – Cobbity and Camden, the Thomas Hassall College, Parramatta, and O’Connell Plains (photo right, with old friends at Hassall Park, O’Connell).



Research Article

Captain Charles Bishop of the *Nautilus*

by Jean Stewart

Jean Stewart has examined the papers of Captain Bishop of the *Nautilus* in the National Library, Canberra, and followed up his story as told in James Dunk's book *Bedlam at Botany Bay*.

A reading *Bedlam at Botany Bay* by James Dunk (NewSouth Press, 2019), led me to an entry on Charles Bishop. The book asks:

What happened when people went mad in the fledging colony of New South Wales? ... We find out through the tireless correspondence of governors and colonial secretaries, the delicate descriptions of judges and doctors, the brazen words of firebrand politicians, and the heartbreaking letters of siblings, parents and friends. We also hear from the mad themselves. Legal and social distinctions faded as delusion and disorder took root – in convicts exiled from their homes and living under the weight of imperial justice, in ex-convicts and small settlers as they grappled with the country they had taken from its Indigenous inhabitants, and in government officers and wealthy colonists who sought to guide the course of European history in Australia.

Doubt, anxiety, grief and despair intruded into the lives of many of the new settlers. Some became irrational and could no longer govern themselves or be governed by others. They erupted in mania or lost themselves in memories and delusions. Some were consumed by the pressures weighing upon them and killed themselves. Others simply wandered away. These were all problems in the setting of the new colony where discipline, security and industry were fundamental in the business of a fragile government.

Dunk describes madness:

Madness is a beguiling and bewildering idea clothed in an expansive and unwieldy word. The word conjures up a wide range of symptoms, conditions and disorders which are experienced and interpreted in different ways. Madness came before medical treatises and legal doctrines, ran an ill-disciplined course through conversation, folklore and literature, and remains in use still ...it seems to me that acute madness, the kind we now medicate is never less than private suffering – something interior, perhaps—incommunicable, which nevertheless clashes with the world around...

In the 21st century, the deep mental and emotional disruption of madness and its many mysteries are translated carefully into medical vocabularies of health and disease. Psychiatrists and psychologists work to constrain profound disorder within a series of categories, which are paired with psychopharmaceuticals, professional specialities and health insurance identifiers... but despite many advances in ethics, neural science and psychiatric knowledge in the last two centuries we have hardly mastered madness. The mind appears more complex the more we know about it, and our drugs and therapies are only partly effective and cause unwanted effects. Madness remains a mystery...

It registers in families and communities, in stories of eccentricity and silliness which are told and retold, in jokes and taunts, and in chains and straitjackets.

Attempts in the past to deal with madness have led to the creation of lunatic asylums. The most famous was Bethlem Hospital in London, the name taken first from a fertility god but drawn into Christian tradition as

the city of David and the birthplace of Jesus: the fount of peace. The asylum was nicknamed “bedlam” which signifies uproar, chaos, pandemonium.

In New South Wales madness bore only a slight relationship with medicine and the “lunatic asylum”. There was no asylum at all for the first two decades of colonisation, and the insane, whether convict or free, were housed in a gaol and women were sent to the Parramatta Female Factory. The doctors attached to the military personnel stationed in New South Wales and those who formed the Colonial Medical Service rarely arrived with any training in mental symptoms and disorders.

The first “asylum”, established under Macquarie’s decision, was housed in a granary or barn and was opened in a building which had been part of the government farm at Castle Hill in 1811, run by a botanist and by doctors under criminal sentence, with occasional oversight from Samuel Marsden. It was very nearly devoid of medicine altogether, patients escaped frequently, and supplies were hard to obtain. In 1826 a grand jury toured the buildings and pronounced it “Highly unfit, in every point”. When it was closed after 15 years, patients were transferred to the best, indeed the only means of accommodating the insane, a parsonage in Liverpool fitted out as a courthouse – directly opposite the hospital. It would be half a century before the first purpose-built asylum appeared: Tarban Creek, built at great cost on a peninsula on Parramatta River at Gladesville, already known as Bedlam Point. The original sandstone complex was designed by the Colonial Architect, Mortimer Lewis between 1836 and 1838 and the first patients were admitted on 19 November 1838.

At right: An early post card of the Tarban Creek Asylum, later known as Gladesville Asylum.



As it was being built there was considerable interest in its impressive construction and its position, a place of tranquil beauty, indicated that it was not for convicts – it was deemed to be a place dealing with madness in a permanent asylum of which the colony could be proud. This time a superintendent and matron, ideally a married couple, were sought from England. Joseph Digby was appointed from a London Asylum and his wife Susannah was appointed as matron.

Nevertheless, madness stalked the colony, undeterred or perhaps encouraged by the lack of medical apparatus to accommodate it. Nineteenth century methods for determining madness and to determine whether madness was feigned or not included the following observations: the onset of symptoms, overacting, response to surveillance, repudiation of symptoms, abstinence from food, sleep, countenance, the ability to look at an examiner, memory deficiency, alienation of affection, absurdity, insensitivity, hesitation and premeditation in conversation, impropriety, and odour. Sometimes strong drugs were used because it was believed that the truly insane were resistant to them. Hot irons, hot wires, flagellation, intoxication and dousing in cold water were all considered effective tests but the most certain test according to a significant London doctor was the “whirling chair”. Into it suspected feigners were strapped in and violently spun – few could act the part under such discipline.

Madness was captured not by case files and patient registers as nowadays, but by records and letters of the citizens. In the early period the governor and colonial secretary struggled with managing madness with little reference to medical opinion. The courts engaged with madness wherever it appeared to veer into danger, or emerged from criminality and in civil proceedings when families worried that it would ruin their properties. There was no effective asylum until the final years of convict transportation.

The people who made decisions about madness had neither medical nor legal backgrounds – their decisions were noted in court by lawyers or doctors, or in the columns of newspapers and often clashed with the common-sense approaches of juries, judges, and governors. Records were few and far between. They talked of eccentricity, incoherence and singularity and registered permanent conditions such as stupidity, idiocy, amentia, feeble-mindedness or temporary such as derangement, mania, dementia, insanity or lunacy. In courtrooms they decided whether people were of sound or unsound mind. In prisons and ships they said simply that men or women were raving, mad or lunatic.

In the new colony there was drama and anxiety, and minds failed under the strain of life perched between a great unknown continent and the endless expanse of the Pacific Ocean – there was grief, failure and collapse, there was even the madness which travels with success, laying waste to families, associations and businesses – the most significant case was that of John Macarthur who developed delusions of persecution that turned him against his family. Many of the most educated and successful men in the colony were haunted by mania and melancholy – madness shaped the course of individual lives, families and communities and spilled into courts, gaols and institutions for the insane.

I was attracted to the book because I knew that my great grandfather, John Leigh Oakes and his father, my great-great-grandfather, Francis Oakes, had both been diagnosed as insane and both had been incarcerated in the early “Bedlams” in New South Wales. What I was not prepared for was an entry on Captain Charles Bishop. I had written about him briefly in my book on Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall (Stewart, Jean. *Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall. The History of Their Family in Australia 1798 to Early 1900s*. Hassall Family History Association, 2019).

Bishop was captain of the ship, the *Nautilus*, which had brought the Hassalls and other missionaries including Francis Oakes, from Tahiti to New South Wales in 1798 after they had despaired of carrying out the task of converting the inhabitants to the ways of Christianity. Civil disturbance among the Tahitians at the time convinced some of the missionaries that it would be unsafe to stay in Tahiti, so only after one year they embarked on a very battered *Nautilus* and sailed to Sydney where they settled and established successful lives.

Charles Bishop (1765?-1810) appears to have been descended from a lower middle class family of Hampshire, England. He joined the navy in his teens and reached midshipman’s rank. He entered the employ of Sydenham Teast, a Bristol merchant. Teast seems to have been aware of Cook’s journals and knew of Cook and other captains whose journeys advanced the British expansion into the Indian and Pacific Oceans so commissioned ships to explore and trade in the Pacific. From 1792 to 1794 Bishop served in a Teast ship gathering produce from west Africa. He then commanded the *Ruby* to sail to north-west America in search of furs for the Canton trade. He also sailed to Japan and Korea to see if these were possible places for commerce. In September 1794 Teast sent Bishop on the *Ruby* to explore trade possibilities. The ship reached Columbia in May 1795 but the season was over and it was too late for trade. Bishop then decided to go to Hawaii for supplies and to ensure he would be the first ship on the coast in the next season. However, on the way the *Ruby* suffered great damage in January and February and he found that Hawaii could not provide materials for repair. Bishop then sailed to Macao and Canton where he became involved in extremely complex business negotiations. Bishop sailed on to Amboyna, where he sold the *Ruby* and bought the *Nautilus* in November 1796. In his Journal he wrote:

The *Nautilus*, a beautiful little Brig, 4½ years old built at Calcutta, by Colonel Kidd for a yacht, burthen about 80 tons, registered 65, copper bottomed, arm’d and well found in stores, was put up for sale.¹

Alexander Kydd (1754-1826) of the Bengal Engineers, had been promoted Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel in May 1796. Bishop hastened to add in his Journal the details he learned of Alexander Kydd. He was a son of a naval officer and the heir of Robert Kydd, the founder of the Calcutta Botanical Gardens. For Bishop these credentials improved the value of the *Nautilus* as he felt that such a man as Kydd would have insisted that the ship was well built of the best materials.

¹ Roe, Michael., ed. *The Journal and Letters of Captain Bishop on the North-West Coast of America, in the Pacific and in New South Wales 1794-1799*, Cambridge, Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1967, p.212.

Bishop purchased the ship for 6200 dollars, or 4000 Star Pagodas in Madras currency, with Charles Sheldon Timmins as agent for the sale on 23 November 1796.

Bill of Sale made on 23 November 1796 between Charles Sheldon Timmins, Master and Consignee of the Brig *Nautilus*, whereunto Major Alexander Kydd of the Hon'ble East India Company's Engineer Service, is owner. On the one Part, and Charles Bishop agent and consignee for Sydenham Teast, Esquire, Merchant in Bristol on the other part.²

No image has been found of the *Nautilus*, but the Marshall Islands has produced a drawing of a ship which resembles the description. A series of stamps of various ships connected with the Marshall Islands has been produced as a revenue gathering exercise.

The vessel being rigged when he bought her but needing only ballast, water and provisions he decided to equip her to sail to Macao where he could refit the ship to make it more suitable for his trade. He was clearly very pleased with the purchase as he wrote:



In the first place the *Nautilus* is almost new, perfectly sound and good, copper bottomed, sails remarkably fast – Is registered 65 tons but measures and carries near 80, armed with six three pounders Brass guns with six brass swivels, pretty well found in Masts, yards, sails, Rigging anchors and cables and well calculated for the Fur Trade on the North West coast of America...³

Here he engaged Roger Simpson as supercargo – Simpson was later an active figure in Pacific commerce. It was not till June 1797 that the *Nautilus* was able to set off again for America and more trouble ensued. Fierce and prolonged storms caused the vessel to leak and drove her to Formosa, Kamchatka and Hawaii before he reached Tahiti in 1798, the first ship to anchor there since the London Missionary Society missionaries had arrived a year earlier.

Bishop, the first European to arrive since the mission's foundation, was ready to trade firearms but to prevent him from doing so the missionaries supplied his needs from their own resources. There he lost five of the crew who deserted. However, he set off almost at once - probably to halt further desertions or because of the natives' hostility, although he was fearful that he might have to abandon the Expedition altogether. He wrote that he was "harressed and oppressed as I have been with anxiety and distress". He left a letter with the missionaries whom he acknowledged as being exceedingly kind and "have been the means of preventing the villain King and his people from attacking us while in the bay Kareening ...". He intended to proceed to Port Jackson for repairs to be able to resume his expedition and to procure 15000 or 20000 Seal Skins.

A few days later, on 24 March, he brought the ship back to Matavai Bay, having been driven back by strong westerly winds which split sails, opened new leaks and it was obvious Port Jackson was the place to go to for repairs. Several of the crew were unwilling to proceed and two stole off in the night with the only boat.

² Ibid., p.213

³ Ibid., p.215.

As soon as the *Nautilus* arrived back the natives became more hostile. When the missionaries sought to help Bishop by sending a delegation to the natives to urge the deserters' return, their messengers suffered rough handling. On 28 March the missionaries met with:

“great altercation and great searchings of heart. Some estimated Bishop's return as ‘a very Singular Providence, and believed that they must take the escape which the *Nautilus* offered; others “would give all to the Natives rather than leave the Island to go in such a Leaky Ship. The majority were for departure, but wanted only to move to another island, whereas Bishop would take them only to his own new - chosen target of Port Jackson, New South Wales. Eleven of the eighteen missionaries determined to accompany him. The eleven had six dependents ... All was ready to sail on 30 March. But that day was a Friday, and the sailor's superstition forced a day's postponement of the departure of the vessel with all her Christian cargo. ...

The *Nautilus*, damaged and crowded, had a rough journey. An anchor broke loose as they left Matavai Bay. ... The accident forced abandonment of plans to refresh at the Tonga (Friendly) Islands. Bad weather cancelled a projected call at Norfolk Island, and also the taking of observations for a few days. In consequence navigation went astray and the vessel nearly wrecked on the rocky outcrop of Ball's Pyramid one day, and on Lord Howe Island the next. On 14 May she reached Sydney...”⁴

Having reached Sydney Bishop wrote:

The King having meditated a plan to Cutt off the Missionaries, for the sake of their property, soon as we should sail, and had already committed hostilities on part of them who went to endeavour to recover our boat and People, they all met in Council and the Majority resolved, if we would take them on board, to leave the Island and go with us to Port Jackson, agreeing to draw bills on the directors of the Missionary society, for the Expences which would arise for their Passage, and it having been our intention, previous to leaving the Society Islands to lay in such a stock of Provisions, as would prevent the necessity of our purchasing much at Port Jackson, where of course we Expected it would be dear, we agree'd to take them on Condition they should pay the difference of Price between buying them here and at Port Jackson and work their passage down in the vessel. And on 29th March we received on board 11 men 4 Women 4 Children with all their Cloths and Effects, and on 31st we got under way and sailed. Our Anchor being hooked on a rock we unfortunately parted the Cable and lost it, and put to sea, Harressed and oppressed in mind with a Leaky ship & with only one Anchor – on the 8th April a Rupture of a blood vessel in my stomach which continued, with intermissions of a few hours, four days, had very nigh put a period to my sufferings and life together. However it happily stopped on the 12th, and in the course of a few weeks I became pretty well – on the 14th May we arrived Safe at Port Jackson, the vessel making about 2 feet water per hour.

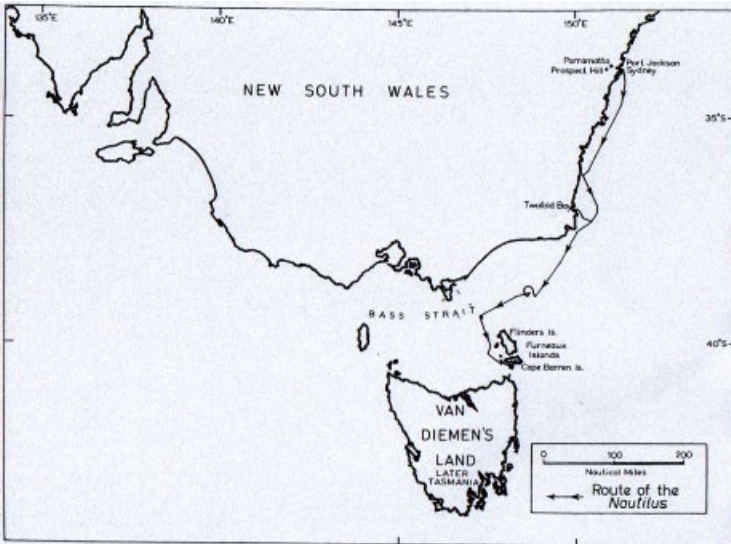
The next day being 15th May, I signified to Richard Atkins Esquire deputy Judge Advocate, for the Colony, that we should Protest as to the necessity of our coming to ort Jackson, and on the 18th the Following Protest and general Statement of the voyage, was made by myself Officers & part of the Crew.⁵

In Sydney he had the ship surveyed by the Master builder of the Kings Yard as to the necessary repairs to make the vessel seaworthy paid for by the missionaries and later by the Society.

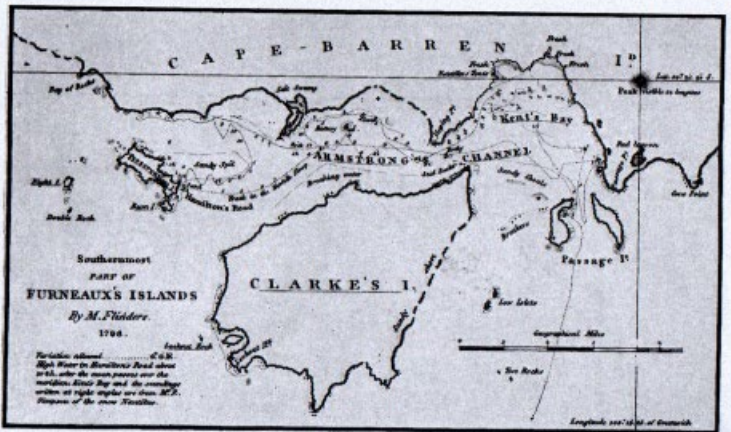
While he was in Sydney Bishop noticed how useful the port would be for the base for trade. Local artisans repaired the *Nautilus* and merchants supplied stores – all very efficient. As well it was a source of labour

⁴ Ibid., Introduction

⁵ Ibid, p.282.



Map I(a) South-east Australia: the approximate route of the *Nautilus* on her first trip to the sealing grounds, October 1798 (Source: *Historical Records of New South Wales*, III, map facing p. 769).



as many ex-convicts yearned to return to England. Bishop even found himself able to perform a public service by sitting on a court investigating a mutiny on a convict transport. He also received support from the authorities especially Governor Hunter and Naval officer William Kent. Above all he heard of the rich seal fisheries in the Bass Strait from the survivors of the *Sydney Cove* which had been wrecked there between Preservation and Rum Islands in the Furneaux group in January 1797, so he set off with Simpson to exploit them, carrying out two expeditions there.

The *Nautilus* left Sydney in October 1798 accompanied by the sloop *Norfolk*, in which Bass and Flinders were to circumnavigate Tasmania. The two vessels sailed down the Australian coast and Flinders surveyed Twofold Bay. They continued south to Cape Barren Island and *Nautilus* anchored at what Bishop called Kent Bay after Naval Officer Kent and from there Flinders proceeded on his explorations and Bishop returned with details of the journey to Sydney.

Bishop returned from the south several times bringing with him seal skins. He also began to carry cargo to Norfolk Island on the *Nautilus* for storekeeper William Campbell. Success in the fisheries and other ventures had made Bishop very

optimistic and a new scheme was developed for him to join with George Bass to take a well-chosen cargo to Canton for profit. Local financiers such as Naval Officer Kent, Thomas Jamison, a colonial surgeon, and James Williamson, the Deputy Commissary contributed funds for the venture.

In May 1799 Bishop set off for Canton, having received letters of marque to validate any attacks he might make on Spanish shipping to seek plunder and prizes from ships of the King's enemies. A letter of marque was a commission authorising privately owned ships known as privateers to capture enemy merchant ships and were issued by the High Court of Admiralty. Privateers were viewed as heroic and noble as opposed to privates who had no letters of marque and were universally condemned as thieve and vagabonds – they were issued until 1856. This voyage saw some original exploration among the Marshall and Gilbert Islands.

At Right: Memorial plaque erected at the Heber Chapel, Cobbitty on 17 May 1998 by grateful descendants of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall.



At Canton Bishop sold his sealskins and also the *Nautilus*, having sought and received permission from the Local East India Company representative to sell the ship provided that:

“the purchaser is a British subject, trading under the Licence and protection of the Honorable Company, but it is not in our power to grant you permission to sell to any person not of that description”.

He then left for England. During the summer of 1800 he discharged his obligations to Teast and the East India Company. Then he would probably have visited family and met Miss Sparkshot to whom he was soon betrothed although there is no evidence anything came of it. He and Bass worked hard on preparing for the speculative voyage to New South Wales. His brother William Bishop of Basingstoke put up £444 for the venture. Total funds raised amounted to £10,890. They purchased the *Venus*, a fine seventy-six-foot vessel, the cargo for Sydney and other goods including otter furs for Canton. They left Portsmouth on 9 January 1801. They reached Cape Town in June and were warned off trade with New Guinea and heard that the Sydney market was dull. They found this to be true when they arrived in August and found that that goods were plentiful, but credit was not. Governor Philip Gidley King decided to relieve the colony’s lack of fresh meat by importing pork from Tahiti. King sought advice from former missionary Rowland Hassall now comfortably settled in Parramatta and sent greetings both to the depleted mission and to the chief Otoo, now Pomare II, and commissioned Bass and Bishop to take the *Venus* to trade with the Tahitians. After sailing round New Zealand and nearby islands they eventually landed at Matavai on 24 January 1801. Trade went very well. Bishop became involved in Tahitian politics and supported King Pomare and defeated the king’s enemies in 1802. Bishop also trafficked in firearms when he thought it desirable. Bass had however been worried about Bishop’s mental health:

Bishop has been totally useless to me and the concern for many months past, indeed ever since I left him at Otaheite in February and went to the Sandwich Islands. He is still no better, and that being the case I shall leave him to recover whilst I make the next voyage. It is more than probable he will be in the grave before my return.⁶

It appears that Bass had intended to break the connection with Bishop. However, a second voyage was undertaken in 1803. Bishop was left in Tahiti while Bass set off to travel to South America, never to be seen again.

The next eighteen months were perhaps the most tranquil in Bishop’s recorded life. By May 1803 he had enough health and confidence to pay one hundred guineas for two farms covering a hundred acres at Prospect Hill, a pleasant farming district twenty miles west of Sydney. In August Governor King granted him another hundred acres and it went under the name of “Bass and Bishop’s Prospect”, so evidently Bishop considered his farming as an extension of the partnership with Bass.

He began to build up local friendships:

His maritime companions – Jamison, Kent and Williamson – lived in New South Wales and remained close. The Governor King himself was reportedly “intimate”. Most closely associated with him were a group of gentlemen convicts, particularly one called John Grant. He was a highly eccentric man, transported for shooting the guardian of a girl for whom he had a vain infatuation. He came to New South Wales with letters of introduction from ex-Governor Hunter and with libertarian beliefs. He became so close to Bishop that in mid 1804 he went to live on Bass and Bishop’s Prospect. Grant wrote that at this time Bishop was doing well “He has 3 men and 1 woman servant, books and every comfort a farm can afford; with a musquet and a horse ready shod I wish to hunt”.

⁶ Ibid, p.1.

Such opulence resulted less from solid wealth than from Bishop's extravagance, which at this very time had caused a quarrel with Jamison, who sought to supervise Bishop's expenditure of the partnership funds. Still Grant was impressed by this apparent material prosperity, with which, moreover, went gifts of character:

"Bishop is a man of noble mind tho' fond of women, an excellent navigator and a poet in his way on sea subjects", "he possess a mind very rare for it is open and artless as my own". Worried by Bass's long absence, Bishop still hoped to return to England and Miss Sparkshot; meanwhile he made the colony his "adopted country" and gave Grant his affectionate sympathy".

However it was becoming obvious that:

Bishop was going mad. Whenever the process first became overt (the quarrel with Jamison? The war mongering at Tahiti? The purchase of the *Nautilus* at Amboyna?) by November 1804 it had advanced so far as to cause Bishop to write to Rowland Hassall, now a retailer with whom he had considerable business.

In his letter he asked that Hassall should deliver his bread not by a servant but by Hassall's son. He complained that he found:

"Inclosed also is part of some particles of white matter I picked out of the last pound of Tea – I had from you have the goodness, I call on you as a *Christian* and a man who hath received no ill (at my Hands) to take care nothing unwholesome is mixed, in such articles of food etc I may receive from you, for having been unaccountably poorly these two or three days past I begin to assume again the vigilance and caution which under the blessing of God! Preserved my life so often before – and am determined in no instance, to omit, taking the legal course of Law, against any one, whom I may feel confident of convicting of any base attempts, to destroy me."

Bishop's condition was now so bad that Governor King put him under the charge of John Savage, a government surgeon at Parramatta and Bishop probably lived at either the hospital or the gaol there. Grant took over the farm and felt much concern about the situation. Grant thought that Bishop's condition might have been caused by grief for the loss of Bass and extravagance brought on by financial difficulties. One of Bishop's hallucinations was that he believed himself to be governor of New South Wales and another was that he had discovered gold. Grant, while admitting that King treated Bishop kindly enough, believed that Bishop's confinement was an example of government tyranny. Grant made this opinion and his other criticisms of King so well known that in mid-1805 he was re-transported to Norfolk Island.

On 14 October 1805 King appointed a civil jury of twelve to consider Bishop's sanity. It followed roughly the procedure which had been practised in England and Scotland since the 12th century. A petitioner, usually a family member, presented affidavits and some semblance of medical advice requesting examination for lunacy or idiocy. Lawyers then presented evidence to the jury. Witnesses usually were people who knew the subject well and were called to give detailed testimony. Opposing lawyers could be called to give evidence for sanity or the subject could defend themselves. A core element of the trial was the examination of the alleged lunatic. If the jury then decided that the subject was *non compos mentis*, they and their property were entrusted to a friend or acquaintance willing to take on the burden.

The jury found Bishop "incapable of governing himself, his chattels, lands and tenements". John Macarthur and Samuel Marsden were appointed as his trustees and instructed to draw on his estate for his "maintenance and support: and to preserve the estate". They called for Bishop's outstanding debts so they could be paid. In September 1805 it was determined that the debts amounted to over £4,000. Jamison, principal surgeon and magistrate and his former financial supporter now became Bishop's trustee and organised the sale of Bishop's property. Further debts were found and by 1809 Bishop remained confined in gaol as one who was insane. Lieutenant-Governor William Paterson, now administrator of the colony, wrote that Bishop was "A pauper Confined in the Gaol without, I learn, any funds to support him but the Prison Allowance". Charles Bishop had become a financial liability after his wealth had vanished in the Pacific and he had become a pauper drawing from the gaol fund for his board and treatment.

Grant had now returned from Norfolk Island and urged Paterson to end Bishop's misery by arranging his return to England. Jamison, now Bishop's trustee, agreed, and thought that a sea voyage might cure him. Grant visited Bishop in gaol in early April 1809 and found him in "his usual miserable state, ill-clad and exposing his genitals". A few days later Bishop left confinement and walked towards Government House, prepared "to take up residence". Instead, he was found lodgings in the Rocks area and the government paid his landlady, Mrs Pugh, an allowance from the gaol fund and a man to attend him. It was now decided that Bishop should be returned to England so, accompanied by his personal papers, he left Port Jackson aboard the *Mary Ann* on 15 October 1809 and no other record has been found of him. So ended Bishop's story - one with a tragic ending. He had left England in 1794 as an intelligent, competent, and likeable man. The many stresses of navigation, of business, of personal relations and of politics, overcame him. His last years in Australia passed in darkness and poverty.

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The following items have been added to the Association's bibliography of references to the Hassall family.

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This volume, which is available online at

https://www.google.com.au/books/edition/The_History_of_the_Wesleyan_Methodist_Mi/da8O_AQAAIAAJ?hl=en, will be of particular interest to descendants of Mary Cover Hassall and Walter Lawry. It includes extensive examination of Lawry's missionary work.

Kerr, J. *The Dictionary of Australian Artists: Painters, Sketchers, Photographers and Engravers to 1870*. Oxford University Press, 1992.

Includes brief biographies of Ann Hassall and possible other members of the family.

Kwok, Juanita. "The Chinese in Bathurst: Recovering Forgotten Histories." *School of Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. PhD, Charles Sturt University, 2018.

P70: "In January 1854, two Amoy labourers, Teng Nong and Wi Wee appeared before the Bathurst Court of Quarter Sessions after being sent down by the Mudgee Bench. The *Bathurst Free Press* reported that the two, who were in the employment of Richard Rouse, were found guilty of assaulting Richard Hassall [son of Jonathan and Mary], the grandson of Richard Rouse, to whom Towns had sent six unnamed Chinese labourers in 1852. Hassall was inspecting the fields to see if the wheat was ripe for harvesting when he was attacked by Teng Nong and Wi Wee and a third Chinese man. Hassall managed to escape to the house, but the men followed him with reaping hooks and laid siege overnight. When Hassall escaped to the stable the next day, he was attacked by the three men. Hassall fired his revolver at one of the men who fell and may have died, as only two Chinese men were subsequently tried. Teng Nong and Wi Wee were found guilty and sentenced to twelve months hard labour in Bathurst Gaol."

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This paper narrates the fate of Edward Main, one of the Duff missionaries who landed in Tahiti with Rowland and Elizabeth in 1797 and escaped to Sydney with them aboard the Nautilus in 1798. Unlike Rowland and Elizabeth, however, Main did not fare well in Sydney, and when asked by the LMS whether he was suitable for a return to the mission field, Rowland felt obliged to counsel against it.

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Mentions Hassalls, including Samuel Hassall as original lessees, from 1860 to 1870, of property near ? Bundaberg known as *Tantith*. The Hassalls were in business with relatives, the Tooths.

Oakes, George Spencer. "Blazers of the Australian Track. Australasian Pioneers X: The First Missionaries. Oakes, Hassall and Shelley. Mainly Genealogical." *Country Life Stock and Station Journal* (22 November 1929).

This article is hard to obtain since TROVE does not include the journal beyond 1925. Oakes relates the context of the birth of each of Rowland and Elizabeth's children, and their marriage partners, to emphasise the close relations between the Hassall, Shelley, Oakes, Marsden, Betts, Campbell, Oxley, Antill, Bobart and Fairfax families.

Onslow, Sibella Macarthur, editor. *Some Early Records of the Macarthurs of Camden*. Angus & Robertson, 1914. Online at <https://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks13/1302011h.html>

The topic of relations between the Macarthur and Hassall families is of continuing interest, as we seek to understand the extent of the commercial and social interactions. This volume includes two incidental references to the Hassall family in addition to full replication of a letter from Rowland Hassall to Governor King.

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The **Hassall Family History Association** fosters and disseminates research on the life and heritage of Rowland and Elizabeth Hassall and other members of the Hassall family and encourages historical research on other early settler families - particularly those with whom the Hassalls are related or with whom they share historic experience in early Australia. Membership is open to all. Donations are welcome to cover the group's activities. Newsletters are published three times each year (approximately February, June, and November) and are distributed by the Association's webmaster.

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